

# STEVE WHITING

Creative Director | Toronto

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## Profile

Award-winning creative director and brand leader with over 17 years of agency and in-house experience in the consumer packaged goods, beverage alcohol, cannabis, and financial industries. I bring a balance of strategic insight and creative intuition, grounded in understanding consumer psychology and behavior. My approach centers on clarity, simplicity, and impact; distilling complex challenges into design solutions that connect and endure over time. I have built and worked with high-performing creative teams that blend craft with purpose, driving brand growth and inspiring meaningful engagement across every touchpoint.

## Work experience

Mar 2022 - Present  
 Healthcare of  
 Ontario Pension Plan  
 (HOOPP)  
 Toronto, ON

### Director, Creative & Digital Marketing

- Lead a team of 12 creative, digital and analytics professionals supporting all of HOOPP's channels and audiences.
- Introduced AI-driven tools and workflows to elevate creative efficiency and digital storytelling.
- Rolled out comprehensive brand refresh, ensuring clarity and consistency enterprise-wide aligning to global growth.
- Unified creative, digital, and analytics teams, driving collaboration and year-over-year member and audience engagement.

Mar 2020 - Mar 2022  
 Healthcare of  
 Ontario Pension Plan  
 (HOOPP)  
 Toronto, ON

### Senior Manager, Creative Services

- Built HOOPP's first in-house creative team of 4 creatives, expanding capabilities and less reliance on agency support in design, video, and animation.
- Established new brand standards and visual systems across all channels.
- Brought video and motion production in-house, improving agility and cost control.
- Led adaptive creative strategies during the pandemic to sustain engagement and brand consistency.

Jul 2019 - Oct 2020  
 Barrel Hunter  
 Corporation  
 Toronto, ON

### Creative Director / Managing Partner

- Built spirits brands from concept to shelf; naming, identity, packaging, and go-to-market.
- Presented investor and buyer pitches to LCBO and provincial boards
- Launched Mighty Moose Vodka, Fling! RTD, and Glen of Imaal/ Lugnaquilla Irish whiskies.
- Oversaw regulatory, packaging, and production details to ensure retail readiness.

Apr 2018 - Jul 2019  
 Maricann Inc. /  
 Wayland  
 Toronto, ON

### Global Creative Director

- Directed global creative across Canada, Germany, and Switzerland working with freelancers aligning brand strategy and storytelling.
- Launched three top-10 Canadian cannabis brands, driving strong market visibility and differentiation.
- Implemented an agile creative framework, reducing production costs and improving speed to market.
- Developed and implemented packaging working within the constraints of strict Canadian guidelines.

# Work experience

Mar 2015 - Jan 2018  
Diageo Canada  
Toronto, ON

## Head of Creative

- Led and art-directed a team of 4 internal and external designers; and revamped workflows, saving \$1M+ in external creative fees.
- Partnered with Marketing to shape brand platforms from ATL to retail, improving portfolio consistency and speed to market.
- Introduced new production tech and templates, boosting quality and scalability across launches and seasonal programs.
- Acted as a bridge between creative and commercial goals, elevating pitch work and sell-in materials for priority brands.

Aug 2013 - Mar 2015  
Diageo Canada  
Toronto, ON

## Senior Graphic Design Specialist

- Provided art direction on pitches and campaigns; created sales tools and quarterly kits that sharpened field execution.
- Managed national digital asset systems and web portal, improving access, governance, and on-time delivery.
- Coordinated cross-team timelines to keep complex, multi-brand projects on track and on brief.
- Built early standards for retail and POS storytelling that later scaled portfolio-wide.

Jun 2009 - Jun 2013  
Lampo Communications  
Toronto, ON

## Senior Graphic Designer / Studio Manager

- Led CPG and beverage-alcohol brand work across identity, packaging, retail/POS, and launch toolkits for multiple mainstream brands.
- Directed the Canada Dry masterbrand redesign, defining packaging, retail systems, and brand guidelines.
- Designed limited-edition Snapple cans and supporting retail programs to drive seasonal excitement and visibility.
- Owned end-to-end production (pre-press, vendor coordination, QA), ensuring flawless shelf and in-store execution.

May 2010 - Present  
S2 Brand Solutions  
Toronto, ON

## Freelance Creative

- Project/retainer work in brand, packaging, web, and content (CPG, alcohol, finance).
- End-to-end delivery for brands like Fever-Tree, Coca-Cola, Manulife, 24Pet, Reid's Distillery.
- Built pitch decks, sell-in kits, launch toolkits to speed go-to-market.
- Hands-on brand systems, 3D packaging comps, motion, web through production.

# Accolades

Summit International Awards  
S2 Brand Solutions

Hermes Creative Awards Platinum & Gold  
Maricann, HOOPP

DotCOMM Awards  
HOOPP

# Skills

- **Creative & Content:** Creative direction; brand identity/systems; packaging; 3D mockups; retail/POS; campaign storytelling; UX/UI
- **Strategy:** Consumer psychology; positioning; simplification; GTM; briefs; engagement/measurement
- **Leadership/Ops:** Team leadership & mentoring; cross-functional collaboration; change management; roadmaps; budget/vendor management; agile/scrum
- **Digital/Content:** Headless CMS, motion/video; content systems; social; email/CRM
- **Production/Compliance:** Pre-press & print; comps/mockups; accessibility; regulated (alcohol/cannabis)
- **Tools:** OpenAI (Codex, ChatGPT) Claude (Claude, Claude Design), Gemini, Higgsfield, CoPilot, Adobe CC (Ps/Ai/Id/Pr/Ae); Figma; Office 365; Azure; monday.com; Blender

# Education

George Brown College - 2012  
User Experience Design with a focus on human factors

Herzing College Toronto - 2009  
Graphic Design  
4.0 GPA with Honours